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is supplied. The account of the Harvard Observatory, near Arequipa, and its work is noteworthy; also the account of the trip in the new tunnel through the Andes from Argentina to Chile. Director General John Barrett of the Pan American Union writes an appreciative preface. DAVID H. BUEL.

**Venezuela.** By Leonard V. Dalton. 320 pp. Map, ills., index. T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1912. 9 x 6.

Venezuela is known among us as the land of coffee and asphalt, of Bolivar and Castro, upon the occasion of whose boundary dispute with Great Britain President Cleveland pronounced his strong reassertion of the Monroe Doctrine. In the 241 pages of his book the author of this work gives a clear but brief account of all these matters. The chapters on the history of the country, political, commercial and industrial, are more extended than those dealing with the geography, geology, botany, zoology and ethnology. His account of education in Venezuela is quite brief, perhaps because education itself is not much developed there. The illustrations are good half-tones of the scenery, public buildings and monuments of the country. A map in black and white displays the mountains, rivers, international and state boundaries, the capitals, railroads and roads of Venezuela. The appendices record the figures for population, trade, meteorology, vital statistics, and finance. The bibliography quotes 411 works on Venezuela. The final chapter on the future of the country is timely. DAVID H. BUEL.

#### AFRICA

**The Agricultural and Forest Products of British West Africa.**

By Gerald C. Dudgeon. Imperial Inst. Handbooks. x and 170 pp. Maps, ills., index. John Murray, London, 1911. 5s. 9 x 5½.

A careful account of the vegetable commercial resources of Gambia, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, Ashanti, Northern Territories, Northern Nigeria and Southern Nigeria.

**The Guide to South and East Africa** for the use of Tourists, Sportsmen, Invalids and Settlers. Edited annually by A. Samler Brown and G. Gordon Brown. liv and 695 pp. Maps, ills. Union-Castle Mail SS. Co., Ltd., London, 1913.

This book improves with every issue. An enormous amount of accurate and up-to-date information is made readily accessible by a good index. The most important maps, by George Philip & Son, have the symbolism used by the best map-makers of Germany and are fine specimens of scientific map generalization. For the vast territory covered this book is one of the best reference sources.

**Botanical Features of the Algerian Sahara.** By William Austin Cannon. vi and 81 pp. Map, ills. Carnegie Inst., Washington, D. C., 1913. \$2.50 10 x 7.

The principal object of this entertaining volume is to add to the breadth of the phytogeographic studies now prosecuted at the desert laboratory of the Carnegie Institution. To geographers the great value of these researches is that they serve to establish upon an observational basis the problems of desiccation in their relation to habitability in past epochs. No little study has been devoted of late to the questions of climatic variation in reference to the very extensive remains of former habitation of the greater deserts. Sir Aurel Stein, Sven Hedin and Prof. Ellsworth Huntington have furnished data covering the deserts of inner Asia, Prof. Huntington has proposed a theory of desiccation. Mr. Cannon in this careful paper reads the lesson of the plants and makes plain the significance of the line of equilibrium, of balanced poise between the aeolian waste of sand and the plant growth of the arid region. In the end these two forces tend to establish permanence, but in the episodes there is an unevenness in the action of the forces, the vegetal force being slow and sure to the very limit of its possibility, the aeolian marked by sudden and

extensive inroads irregularly spaced between periods of quiescence. For the purposes of social geography it is very fortunate that the Algerian region of study is one for which we have not only the material remains of human occupancy but in addition a not inconsiderable written record of historical material. From this fortunate association of phytogeography and a more or less complete record extending over twenty centuries it may be possible for the students of desiccation to establish a time scale by which to measure similar phenomena where the problem must rest most largely on the record of desert vegetation alone.

WILLIAM CHURCHILL.

**The Tribes of Northern and Central Kordofán.** By H. A. MacMichael. Cambridge Archaeol. and Ethnol. Series. xv and 259 pp. Maps, index. University Press, Cambridge, 1912. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York. 10s. 6d.  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ .

We have here another volume in the Cambridge Ethnological Series in which the influence of Dr. A. C. Haddon is most manifest. This monograph gives us a concise statement of all that is known of the past and present of the wild tribes of the Sudan who came out of their seclusion a few years ago to give their hopeless battle against the European advance upon Africa. As is usual in wars, these men of the Mahdi knew very little of what they were fighting for and still less of why they were beaten. Equally the British had very faint information as to the reason of their fighting, but they carried away a profound respect for the battle abilities of these "first-rate fighting men." This seems to tinge Mr. MacMichael's attitude toward the people of his study. He finds them a good lot of semi-savages and his study is interesting. He has conducted careful researches through the tangle of the history of Kordofan and has done considerable toward evaluating the different narratives. Despite all his efforts the meaning of the name Kordofan is still incomprehensible.

**Hausa Folk-Lore, Customs, Proverbs, etc.** Collected and Transliterated with English Translation and Notes. By R. Sutherland Rattray. With a preface by R. R. Marett. Vol. 1: xxiv and 326 pp. Vol. 2: 315 pp. Ills. Oxford University Press (Amer. Branch), New York, 1913. \$9.25 two vols.  $9\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ .

Not only is this material of the utmost value in the study of African folklore but Mr. Rattray has followed a method which should serve as a model for such inquiry. Qualified as an interpreter in the Hausa and in several cognate tongues he has recognized the factor of error which is introduced when the European observer is obliged to collect tales from word of mouth and subjects them to the double chance of error in transcription and translation. Mr. Rattray selected one of the wisest of Hausa and instructed him to write out the manuscripts here reproduced in facsimile. Facing each page is transliteration and translation and thereby the idiom may be literally followed and the possibility of wrong interpretation reduced to the minimum.

We seem in this work to have opened a new pool of African tales, for several motives are introduced which are not found in the great mass of African animal stories. Here we have several instances of the story based on name-magic, a motive which still exists in our child lore but derived from an entirely different source. Here is a sample: The good but scorned wife finds a spoon. Its name is Help-me-that-I-may-taste and every time she calls the spoon by name her calabash is filled with food. The wicked wife becomes envious; she goes out and finds a switch. Its name is Whack-me-that-I-may-feel, she gets a sound beating, and virtue triumphs. In several tales we find the wise and mischievous spider playing tricks upon the other animals, and through the Sierra Leone stories we are able to establish the association of the sage spider with the great body of Brer Rabbit myth which is spread so extensively through Africa.

WILLIAM CHURCHILL.

**South Africa.** Seven Lectures. Prepared for the Visual Instruction Committee of the Colonial Office by A. J. Sargent. Visual Instruction Comm. Handbooks, No. 5. 120 pp. Maps, ill. G. Philip & Son, Ltd., London, 1914. 8d.  $7\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ .

Contains outlines of a course of seven lectures on South Africa including